

**SPECIAL MEETING OF
BELMONT REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Tuesday, May 29, 2007
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ONE TWIN PINES LANE**

CALL TO ORDER 7:40 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Directors Present: Dickenson, Lieberman, Mathewson, Warden (via teleconference) Feierbach

Directors Absent: None

Staff Present: Executive Director Crist, Agency Attorney Zafferano, Community Development Director de Melo, Finance Director Fil, Public Works Director Davis, Police Chief Mattei, Agency Secretary Cook

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Resolution to Rescind Action Taken on May 8, 2007, to enact an ordinance approving a Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) and Rezone to Establish a Planned Development (PD) Zoning District, Tentative Subdivision Map, to Construct a Mixed-Use (Commercial/Residential) Building at 1300 El Camino Real (Application No. 2006-0012)

Community Development Director de Melo stated that as part of the actions taken regarding this project, an ordinance was introduced on May 8th. Staff subsequently learned that the Redevelopment Agency is not authorized to enact ordinances. The City Council will address this ordinance at its special meeting following this RDA meeting. He noted that the project is not affected by the delay in taking care of this housekeeping item.

ACTION: On a motion by Director Mathewson, seconded by Director Dickenson, Resolution 450 to Rescind Action Taken on May 8, 2007 to enact an ordinance Approving a Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) and Rezone to Establish a Planned Development (PD) Zoning District, Tentative Subdivision Map, to Construct a Mixed-Use (Commercial/Residential)_Building at 1300 El Camino Real, was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Public Hearing to Consider a Conceptual Development Plan(CDP) and Rezone to Establish a Planned Development (PD) Zoning District, and Adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration for Rehabilitation and Relocation of the Historic Emmett House to 1000 O'Neill Avenue (Application No. 2006-0090)

Contract Planner Ouse outlined the project and described the Agency's ownership of both the sending and the receiving sites. She noted that the Emmett House would be converted into two dwelling units, and some historic elements would be restored. The Planning Commission will still need to approve a number of entitlements, including a Detailed Development Plan. She clarified that the project is architecturally consistent with the General Plan and the Downtown Specific Plan. She noted that two of the four protected trees which are slated to be removed could be maintained, based on how the sidewalk on Sixth Avenue is designed. She clarified that the vacated site on Ralston Avenue could be transitionally landscaped until a final decision is

made regarding its future use. She noted that the Planning Commission unanimously approved the project as presented.

In response to Chair Feierbach, Contract Planner Ouse clarified that the proposal was not to straighten Sixth Avenue, but to widen it to be consistent with its width north of the project.

Chair Feierbach expressed support for keeping the curve in Sixth Avenue. She also stated that the sending site needs to become a gathering place, not converted to retail space. She noted that the placement of the Emmett House will determine the alignment of Sixth Avenue.

In response to Director Warden, Contract Planner Ouse stated that if there is a desire to eliminate the curve in Sixth Avenue, the eucalyptus trees would need to be removed and a sidewalk installed. She noted that a pathway could be considered rather than curb and gutter.

Director Warden expressed concern that the sending site not remain a vacant dirt lot for an extended period of time.

Discussion ensued regarding the calculation of the square footage of the converted Emmett House.

Aldo Trevisan, Belmont resident, expressed his dislike for the riprap which was installed along the creek some years prior. He noted that the City did not ask him to move a trailer he had, it was simply tagged. He would like to remove the eucalyptus between his property and the receiving site, since they are messy. He commented that since property is being abandoned in order to accommodate the Emmett House move, other properties in the area should receive the same treatment.

Denny Lawhern, Belmont Historical Society, expressed his support for approval of the project. There is a need to address the sidewalk issue along Sixth Avenue, and a curved walkway may be a good compromise. He commented that the donor site could become Emmett Plaza.

In response to Director Mathewson, Community Development Director de Melo outlined the various costs associated with the project, including the original purchase price of the Emmett House, the purchase of the receiving site, and the relocation and rehabilitation estimates. He clarified that this is a Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) project.

Discussion ensued regarding below market rates in other areas in the Redevelopment Agency, as well as resale restrictions that could be placed on the property if the units are sold later. He noted that restrictions can be included in the initial documentation, with a provision for some appreciation.

Contract Planner Ouse stated that a typical resale contract allows for right of first refusal for the City, in which case the Redevelopment Agency could buy the unit back and resell to another buyer. Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for the property could address aesthetic issues.

Director Warden expressed his support to have the units owned rather than rented. He concurs regarding the conversion of the sending site to a plaza with landscaping and a fountain. He prefers to keep Sixth Avenue curved, and would support a meandering pathway.

In response to Director Mathewson, Contract Planner Ouse stated that two historic experts have been contacted regarding the Emmett House, and the registered historian is fairly confident that the home could be eligible for State or National historic registry. She noted that seven criteria need to be met. She clarified that when a previous application was submitted, the property was deemed to have had too many alterations since 1910. The current proposal is to restore items missing and to remove others added. Adaptive re-use is consistent for historic registry.

Director Mathewson commented that Belmont has decimated historic buildings over the years, and just saving the Emmett House may be worth doing.

Director Lieberman expressed support for saving the historic structure, and commented that it is a bonus to also be creating housing from it. He supports doing whatever works best for the house and the neighbors relative to the sidewalk issue on Sixth Avenue. The donor site is very visible and he does not support a vacant lot, but he expressed concern regarding the costs for temporary use. He supports a sale of the Emmett House units rather than rental, because of the sense of ownership. He supports the RDA's right of first refusal for future sales.

Director Dickenson concurred with the need for a plan for the donor site, and he would support its use as a gathering place rather than additional parking. He recommended widening the driveway of the new site to the full width of the garage. He supports the installation of a meandering sidewalk, and there is a need to provide better pedestrian access in the area. He supports a sale of the units versus rental. There is a need for a clear clause regarding future at-market sales, since low-to-moderate funds will be used. There is a need for a project manager in order to hold down costs.

Director Mathewson expressed his support for sale versus rental of the Emmett House units. He has no opinion regarding the sidewalk issue. He noted that although there was unanimity regarding its decision, some Planning Commissioners were uncomfortable with some aspects of the design. He wants to make the right decision for Belmont and historic preservation.

Community Development Director de Melo noted that the Planning Commission raised the issue regarding the trees along Sixth Avenue, and that this can be addressed during the detailed design phase when the sidewalk would be discussed.

In response to Chair Feierbach, Finance Director Fil clarified that the sending site on Ralston Avenue was purchased by the low-to-moderate income fund of the RDA, which would need to be repaid if the site is not used for housing. He also clarified that the RDA can fund a plaza. It would pay back the LMI portion of the RDA funds.

Chair Feierbach expressed support for leaving the curve in Sixth Avenue, and she supports a meandering path. The eucalyptus trees need to be addressed, and she expressed concern regarding the effect their removal might have on the creek. She would like additional

information regarding a land lease for the property. She supports the restoration of the Emmett House even if it does not qualify for historic registry.

Contract Planner Ouse stated that the cost to move the building is estimated to be between \$60,000 and \$75,000.

Director Warden stated he is not concerned regarding the historic registry, and that preservation for the City is sufficient. Some sort of sidewalk or path is needed for safety, and he commented that the City would require curb and gutter if this were a private development. He supports using RDA funds to create a plaza since it eliminates blight.

ACTION: On a motion by Director Mathewson, seconded by Director Dickenson, the Public Hearing was unanimously closed by a roll call vote.

ACTION: On a motion by Director Lieberman, seconded by Director Dickenson, Resolution 451 Adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration of Environmental Significance for Establishment of a Planned Development (PD) Zone and Associated Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) for Rehabilitation and Relocation of a Two-Unit Residential Structure (the Historic Emmett House) and Construction of a Two-Car Detached Garage at 1000 O'Neill Avenue, was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 8:50 P.M.

Terri Cook
Agency Secretary

Meeting audio-recorded and videotaped
Audio Recording 669